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NINTH PLENUM SPEECH OF OSKAR LANGE  
ON DEVELOPING PEASANTS' INTEREST IN FARM PRODUCTION IN POLAND

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[The following report of Oskar Lange, rector of the Main School of Planning and Statistics, was given at the Ninth Plenum of the KC PZPR (Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party), held in Warsaw on 29-30 October 1953.

The report was given at the plenum as an amplification of the featured report of Premier Boleslaw Bierut, "Task of Party in Struggle to Raise Standard of Living of Workers in Current Phase of Building Socialism." An English-language translation of Bierut's report is available in the PAP (Polish Press Agency) release of 6 November 1953, pages 1-44.]

The theses of the Central Committee and the report of Comrade Bierut point to the necessity for developing the commodity production of the individual peasant farms, whose production still is the major part of our total agricultural production. The theses emphasize the need for increasing the material interest of the working peasants in developing over-all production and commodity production. The application of material interest as an incentive associated with commodity production, the predominant part of agricultural production, is a skillfull means of exploiting the law of value in strengthening the economic unity between city and village, and at the same time in strengthening and deepening the economic basis for a worker-peasant alliance.

Today Comrade Minc properly called attention to the danger of one-sided and random application of the theses. In addition to material interest, we cannot ignore the compulsory deliveries, agricultural technology, and other means. Briefly, I would like to make a few remarks pertaining to the problems of the working peasants' material interests.

The following are means of increasing the peasant's material interest:

The first is the principle that compulsory deliveries will not increase in the near future. Thus the surplus resulting from increased production will be sold on the open market, and will raise the income of peasant farms.

The second is the increased supply of farm equipment, of building materials, and of consumer goods. The possibility of obtaining industrial articles adapted to the needs of the village will be an incentive to increase over-all production and commodity production. The transformation of the industrial productive structure as called for in the theses will contribute to increasing peasant farm production and the amount of agricultural products destined for the market.

It is necessary to improve the rural trade organizations, especially the gmina cooperatives, to utilize the opportunities created by the increased industrial production designated for rural needs. Rural trade must provide the working peasant with both the quantity and quality of commodities required.

A socialist agricultural transformation is one of the basic aims of our party, whose task is the building of a socialist society. We do not deny nor can we ever deny this aim. For that reason the theses speak of strengthening and further developing the producers cooperative movement in the village, and offer means of realizing this aim. We must accurately inform the working

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peasant of the connection between our program of helping the individual peasant farms and the further development of the producers cooperative movement. On this subject the class enemy, the kulak and imperialist agent, is causing confusion among the mass of peasants. The enemy tells the small and medium peasants that it is worthless to exert themselves in order to increase agricultural production, especially livestock, since they are faced with the prospect of joining producers cooperatives and therefore will not benefit from the fruits of their labor.

Yesterday, Comrade Kruczek disclosed facts concerning the effects of the enemy's work. This situation, as far as I know, is not confined solely to Bydgoszcz Wojewodstwo. We must be prepared to find that the enemy will respond to the plenum resolutions with intensified action and will increase his endeavors to persuade the working peasant that it is worthless to increase commodity production. By intensive work in the village we must oppose the enemy's work and expose the antinational and antipeasant character of this propaganda, the purpose of which is to hinder the small and medium peasants from exploiting the possibilities of increasing their income. This propaganda is in agreement with the immediate interests of the working peasants, and it is necessary for every working peasant to understand this.

Moreover, it is necessary for every working peasant and for all field activists to be convinced of the soundness of our fundamental theses, that the production growth of the small and medium peasant farms does not contradict the further growth and universal strengthening of the producers cooperative movement. These theses represent the basis of our policy of the socialist transformation of agriculture. Socialist transformation of agriculture is not a contradiction but a further development of our policy of increasing the material interest of the working peasant in the development of individual peasant farms.

In our discussion, comrades Mine and Stasiak called attention to the fact that the road of the small and medium peasant toward the producers cooperative movement is not through impoverishment of his individual farm, but through its full development coupled with protection from kulak exploitation. Having fully exhausted the possibilities for developing his individual peasant farms which is assured to him by the people's state, the small and medium peasant will become convinced that the individual peasant farm limits him in increasing his income, and that a further increase in income requires a transfer to collective farming. Such is the logical sequence of the policy of increasing the working peasants' material interest in the development of their individual peasant farms, and the policy of the socialist transformation of agriculture.

The principle of free will in joining producers cooperatives guarantees that the small and medium peasant can join a producers cooperative when he believes it can be of benefit to him. Entrance into producers cooperatives is a further step in the exploitation of the principle of material interest in increasing over-all production and commodity production. Our task is to create conditions which will make the working peasants' entrance into producers cooperatives increasingly advantageous; this will result in a rapid development of the producers cooperative movement.

The settlement of legal matters pertaining to the peasant's ownership of land will strengthen the conviction of the working peasant that the prospect of socialist transformation of agriculture is not an obstacle to increasing the income of his farm. Moreover, we must emphasize the connection between the level of the individual peasant farm and the material benefits from entering producers cooperatives. The statutes of lower types of producers cooperatives provide for remuneration for the livestock contributed by each peasant before entering a producers cooperative. Therefore, the more

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valuable the individual peasant farm, the higher the remuneration for entering the producers cooperatives. We might again study the statutes of the model producers cooperatives from the viewpoint of eventually expanding this remuneration. This matter demands special study, and that is why I am not going into it too deeply. I only want to present it as a problem to be worked out. At any rate, the lower types of producers cooperatives clearly create material incentives for working peasants to fully develop individual farms, in case of a later entrance into a producers cooperative.

The harmony between the working peasant's material interest in the development of the individual farm and the development of producers cooperatives is the basis of our policy. This policy must find full expression in our work to convince the small and medium peasants that it will pay them to develop the over-all production and commodity production of their individual peasant farms.

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